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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/730,893	12/10/2003	Philippe Dumoux	DUMOUX3	5162

1444 7590 05/06/2005

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EXAMINER

COCKS, JOSIAH C

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3749

DATE MAILED: 05/06/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/730,893

Applicant(s)

DUMOUX ET AL.

Examiner

Josiah Cocks

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 December 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 and 14-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 12 and 13 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 10 December 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12/10/2003.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Drawings*

1. The drawings filed on 12/10/2003 are accepted by the examiner.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

4. Claims 1-8 and 14-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,920,251 to Whitenack et al. ("Whitenack") in view of U.S. Patent No. 1,751,241 to Kincannon ("Kincannon").

Whitenack discloses in Figures 1-10 a steam cooker similar to that described in applicant's claims 1-8 and 14-18. In particular, Whitenack shows a steam cooker having two cooking elements (50 and 70), each having peripheral walls (see Fig. 5), and a pedestal having a steam production base (10). Within the base (10) is a water tray (30) for providing steam that also functions as a vessel for recovering juices that has the structures recited in applicant's claims. The cooking elements may be arranged in various configurations for stacking in an upright position upon the pedestal base. These cooking elements would be capable of functioning as rice bowls and therefore considered to meet this recitation in the claims (e.g. see applicant's claim 14). The feet (18) are considered to be the gripping elements recited in applicant's claim 18.

Whitenack does not disclose that the cooking elements are placed in an inverted position on the pedestal so that the peripheral lateral wall at least partially envelopes the pedestal.

Kincannon teaches a cooking device in the same field of endeavor as Whitenack. In Kincannon, the cooking device includes multiple cooking elements (29, 33, 35) that maybe be placed in an upright position for cooking food (see Fig. 1) and in a second inverted position for nesting to facilitate storage wherein the cooking elements at least partially envelope a pedestal base (see Fig. 4, page 1, lines 36-40).

Therefore, in regard to claims 1-8 and 14-18, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the steam cooker of Whitenack to incorporate the cooking element nesting taught by Kincannon as this nesting arrangement desirably allows the cooking device to occupy minimum space for transportation or

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storage (see Kincannon, page 1, lines 36-40) and provides a collapsed arrangement for additional cooking techniques (see Kincannon, page 2, lines 100-110).

5. Claims 9-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Whitenack in view of Kincannon as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 691,380 to Hower ("Hower").

Whitenack in view of Kincannon teach all the limitations of claims 9-11 except for the retractable filling device as described.

Hower teaches a steam cooker in the same field of endeavor as Whitenack. In Hower, the water base includes a filling device (m) that is removable/retractable (see page 2, lines 19-29).

Therefore, in regard to claims 9-11, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the steam cooker of Whitenack to incorporate the removable/retractable filling device of Hower for the desirable purpose of providing convenient packing of the steam cooker (see Hower, page 2, lines 20-23).

***Allowable Subject Matter***

6. Claims 12 and 13 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

***Conclusion***

7. This action is made non-final. A THREE (3) MONTH shortened statutory period for reply has been set. Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR

1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. U.S. Patents to Welch, Hidle, Hait, and Pretre, and foreign documents GB 2 276810 and WO 01/39640 are included to further show the state of the art concerning cooking devices and/or steam cookers with nesting sections and/or pedestal base structure.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Examiner Josiah Cocks whose telephone number is (571) 272-4874. The examiner can normally be reached on weekdays from 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ira Lazarus, can be reached at (571) 272-4877. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR

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system, see <http://portal.uspto.gov/external/portal/pair>. Any questions on access to the Private PAIR system should be directed to the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at (866) 217-9197 (toll-free).

jcc  
April 29, 2005

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Cocks', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**JOSIAH COCKS  
PRIMARY EXAMINER  
ART UNIT 3749**